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**WWOOF VOLUNTEERS IN JAPAN – DEVELOPMENT OF HOTANI NATURE
FARM**

Thesis

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<p>This thesis studies the tourism aspects of volunteering, especially in Japan. Therefore this thesis also deals with the elements of Japanese tourism, Japan as tourist destination and a specific volunteer mediating organization in Japan: the Japanese branch of World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms (WWOOF Japan).</p> <p>In the Case Study this thesis deals with Hotani Nature Farm, a Japanese organic farm. The farm is a member of WWOOF Japan since 2009. The case study researches the development of the farm during the period 2009-2013, and the relationship of the farm with WWOOFers.</p> <p>To better understand the motivation and function of WWOOFers, both the farm and several of the WWOOFers at the farm were subject of a quantitative research regarding their stay at the farm. The research results reflect on the WWOOFers' motivations regarding travelling to Japan, WWOOFing and staying at the farm. It concludes in the possible development of the farm and whether or not the WWOOFers can be considered leisure tourists.</p>	
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1 INTRODUCTION

When I talk about the purpose of this thesis, I have to first describe the circumstances how this thesis idea came to life.

During the autumn semester of 2012 I was participating in the course “Transportation and Tourism”, where I first heard the concept of slow tourism. Though I was long aware of sustainable tourism as a growing trend, after reading many sources, I came to realize how important and yet how exciting and interesting this branch of tourism is.

In the summer of 2013 I participated in a volunteering program through an organization called World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms (in the following: WWOOF), and gained a deep insight of how many young people from all around the world gather together to learn something, to relax, to enjoy their lives and often to take a break from their working life; and while doing so, how they are all effected by the environment, how they learn the language, adapt to the culture and yet, how they are all sharing something from their own cultural heritage. This has inspired me to write about the world of volunteers, tourism as phenomenon in Japan, and to connect the two, introduce a place which combines the two: Hotani Nature Farm in Hirakata city, Osaka district in Japan.

The concept of the thesis mostly relies on the personal experience and a research involving personal acquaintances participating in the same program, visiting the same farm. However, further bibliography is used for theoretical parts to describe the world of volunteers and Japanese tourism. Additionally, a survey and several reports and correspondence were made between the farm, former WWOOFers and me – several facts and figures are based on these.

In Chapter 2, the phenomenon and present function of volunteering is being discussed. There will be an overview regarding the most common types of volunteer organizers and the second part of the chapter will focus on one specific organization: WWOOF (and WWOOF Japan).

Chapter 3 deals with general and contemporary tourism in Japan. Japan as a destination will be discussed from both international tourism point of view and from domestic tourism point of view; this aspect reflects why WWOOF volunteers might choose Japan over other possible locations. The second part of the chapter is analysing a survey especially targeting formal WWOOFers, who provided answers regarding their trip to Japan. These answers are compared to the trend and provide a perspective on how WWOOF volunteers are more similar to general tourists or to volunteer workers.

In Chapter 4 the case study company will be introduced. Hotani Nature Farm is a member host of WWOOF Japan who has been accepting WWOOFers for four and half years already. The case study is intended to discuss past, present and future development of the farm, while showing the effects WWOOFing made on it; the corresponding part of the survey is carried out in this chapter and it reflects on how WWOOFers feel about the time they spent on the farm and how the farm might be further developed to accommodate WWOOFers better. In the conclusion the results of the survey are compared to the interview with the farm.

2 VOLUNTEERING AND TOURISM

Volunteering and more importantly international volunteering is not an alien concept in everyday life. One can meet volunteers on the street distributing flyers, volunteer workers on public events, volunteer helpers at the home of elderly or volunteers helping at time of natural disaster sites.

However, as volunteers are technically providing an unpaid workforce, they are rarely seen as tourists themselves. During this chapter, the connection between tourism and volunteerism will be discussed, and the touristic nature of volunteering will be argued.

2.1 Volunteers – workers or tourists?

Local volunteerism shows similarities to being a work rather than a touristic activity; on the contrary, international volunteerism involves elements of leisure tourism. The common picture of a volunteer is someone with spare time who can spend part or the whole of their free time helping to companies, organizations or everyday people in an organized form. As cited by Holmes and Smith (2010), volunteerism is

“Any activity which involves spending time, unpaid, doing something which aims to benefit someone (individuals or groups) other than or in addition to close relatives, or to benefit the environment.”

This definition refers to the formal volunteerism, when a volunteer is connected to the object of the work through an organization and therefore is monitored and managed by the host and/or the intermediary between the volunteer and the host. As Holmes and Smith cites, the differentiating point between informal and formal tourism is:

“Any activity which takes place through not-for-profit organizations or projects and is undertaken: (...) in designated volunteer positions only.”

This definition expresses the similarity between work and volunteer work, however, it also cites “of the volunteer’s own free will and without coercion”, which implies some sort of leisure activity instead of the compulsory nature of a job.

As the availability of long-distance transportation widens and becomes more and more casual, the growth of international volunteerism can also be observed. This trend leads to international volunteers becoming similar to tourists. Based on the definition of World Tourism Organization, tourism is:

“It comprises the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside of their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business, or other purposes nor related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited.” (WTO, 1995)

As volunteers typically stay at foreign destinations a longer time up to two years, do not receive financial aid (though they are usually compensated with food and lodging) and they usually spending free time getting familiar with the environment via tourism activities, international volunteers can be considered as tourists.

2.1.1 Roles of Volunteers in Tourism

As described in the introduction part of this chapter, formal volunteers are usually managed through a company. In tourism, most organizations using volunteers are non-profit, often recruiting the volunteers for special events.

One example for such event is the upcoming 2014 Winter Olympics and Paralympics in Sochi, where numerous volunteers are required to work during the entire event – according to the official webpage, the estimated numbers sum 23 500 volunteers needed in several sectors (Sochi Olympic Games 2014, *Volunteers’ Activities* (http://vol.sochi2014.com/en/volunteers_activities/)).

Tourism volunteers are, as the name describes, volunteer workers in the tourism sector. They can contribute in several ways: volunteering on events, in tourism centres, on heritage sites, in museums, at fairs or even on disaster sites, where they usually try to aid the locals and rebuild the touristic values of the site.

Often, when companies recruit volunteers, however, it is most important, that their work should not seriously overlap with the duties of the workers. Instead, the volunteers should be able to aid the co-workers, provide values and execute tasks, which are otherwise not provided by the paid workers. As Holmes and Smith (2010) points at it,

“a volunteering role needs to be motivating; (...) Ideally, volunteers should offer something in addition to paid staff, perhaps complementing their services or offering something entirely new which paid staff do not have the time for in their busy schedule.”

They also argue that if a volunteer's tasks would substitute a paid worker, it would be ethically wrong and illegal. Therefore unpaid volunteers should not be considered as professional employees – more likely professional advisors or “professional visitors”, who complement the staff. Furthermore, in tourism they can also represent their countries, races, ethics, political or religious beliefs, and so they are bringing additional values to other regions or countries.

2.1.2 Types of Volunteers

Volunteering has several forms, depending on the different interpretations by professionals. Holmes and Smith (2010) suggest six categories that have a particular importance in recent years, out of which the first three are of importance in this thesis:

- *International, transnational and cross-national volunteering*
- *Volunteer tourism*
- *Episodic volunteering*

- *Virtual, online or cyber volunteering*
- *Family and intergenerational volunteering*
- *Corporate, workplace, employee or employer-supported volunteering*

The international volunteers and volunteer tourists will be dealt with in Chapter 3, as WWOOFers are belonging to both categories.

Episodic volunteering will be reviewed in Chapter 4, as several of Hotani Nature Farm's volunteers are doing episodic volunteering.

2.1.3 Volunteer Organizations and Intermediaries

Just like in the above example of Sochi Olympics, in most cases global organizations are helping to connect the volunteers and the locations where they are needed.

Even simply searching on the internet, one can easily find a large scale of internationally involved non-profit organizations, which sends different types of volunteers to different locations all over the world to deal with different tasks. Based on the majority of these sites, the following target groups can be found:

- Gap year volunteers and student volunteers
- VolunTourists
- Eco-volunteers and Wildlife volunteers and
- Civil and community volunteers

Gap year volunteers are typically students in between studies, most typically students graduating from high school and before entering university – although gap year can be a pending or passive school year during university as well. In several cases, company workers might also use a gap year after resigning from a company and before they wish to re-enter to the workforce. Based on the definition of Holmes and Smith (2010), a gap year “is a period of between 3 and

24 months where participants combine travel, paid work, volunteering and/or study". On the other hand, the term student volunteer here refers to students, who use their vacation or compulsory internship to go volunteering, often involving a mere one-month-long period. Some companies dealing with such trips are for example ProjectsAbroad and Global Citizen Year (<http://www.projects-abroad.org>; <http://globalcitizenyear.org>).

VolunTourists are usually volunteers, who go on a vacation and while at the destination, they choose to engage in volunteering besides the common activities of any other tourist – the emphasis of the trip is, however, on leisure and not on volunteering. In the citation of Holmes and Smith (2010) VolunTourist volunteers are described as "[volunteers] being on a 'vacation-minded' holiday". As an example, GoVoluntouring is specialized on these kinds of vacations, and offers a wide variety of global volunteering vacations (<http://govoluntouring.com>).

Eco- and wildlife volunteers are similar in terms of values and goals; they both concentrate on the conservation of the environment. Where wildlife volunteers are typically concentrate of the local fauna (e.g. Wild animals), eco volunteers are responsible for the preservation of entire habitats (for example Coral reefs or rain forests). Examples of such organizations include GoEco and Enkosini Eco Experience (<http://www.goeco.org>; <http://www.enkosini.org>).

Civil and community volunteers are perhaps the most people oriented volunteers, and therefore their work can be the most difficult compared to those belonging to the above categories. In general, they travel to third-world or developing countries to help local communities or civil services in their everyday work. This type of volunteering also requires strong language skills both in English and in the language spoken at the destination, and often involves English teaching to locals. Furthermore, many organizations are looking for medical specialists to locations, where the medical care system is insufficient to support all in need. Some of the large number of organizations are WorldWide Helpers, Global Volunteers and the United Nations Volunteers (<http://www.worldwidehelpers.org>; <http://www.globalvolunteers.org>; <http://www.unv.org>)

2.1.4 Volunteering as a Trend in Slow Tourism

Slow tourism is a significantly emerging trend in the past decades; however, most major publications were released only in the recent years. Even though slow tourism is recognized from its various elements (Slow Food movement, slow transportation trends or even “slow cities”, where the locals are creating a slow tourism package), as a whole it is often labelled under eco tourism or sustainable tourism. Jane Dickinson (et al 2010b) defines slow tourism as:

“...the importance of the travel experience to, and within, a destination, engagement the mode(s) of transport, associations with slow food and beverages, exploration of localities in relation to patrimony [heritage] and culture at a slower pace and, what might be best described as, support for the environment.”

Whereas according to the most quoted description of sustainable tourism:

“Sustainable tourism should:

1. ***Make optimal use of environmental resources*** that constitute a key element in tourism development, maintaining essential ecological processes and helping to conserve natural heritage and biodiversity.
2. ***Respect the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities,*** conserve their built and living cultural heritage and cultural values, and contribute to inter-cultural understanding and tolerance.
3. *Ensure viable, long-term economic operations, **providing socio-economic benefits to all stakeholders** that are fairly distributed, including stable employment and income-earning opportunities and social services to host communities, and contributing to poverty alleviation.”*

(World Tourism Organization, 2009)

Comparing the two definitions, we can see elements which are correlating in both definitions. Supporting the environment is one of the key elements of both

tourism types, however, while the way sustainable tourism uses the environmental resources is a conscious decision and it is pre-planned, slow tourism is environmental friendly because of the modes of transportation and activities engaged during the trip – thus creating sustainability unconsciously, as a result of its nature.

The other important aspect of both definitions is that they both are focusing on the importance of using the services of local communities, helping these communities and respecting both their values and living environment. The additional value in developing these communities means a driving force and motivation for both sides, creating unique memories and triggering a need for the return of the tourist.

Slow tourism therefore overlaps with sustainable tourism, even though the two are not identical.

When placing volunteering into tourism, based on the two tourism categories described earlier, it can be seen both as slow tourism and sustainable tourism, with the different categories blending in more to one or the other. As volunteers are mostly long-term tourists, who stay in one area for their entire volunteering period, using local (often private) accommodations, eating local food often prepared by the local community they work with, and they mostly use the cheapest available transportation (therefore often the slowest as well), they are fulfilling the definition of both tourism branch.

Volunteers are often travelling with very low funds. Many volunteering organizations offer their programs for an average of \$2000-2500 (€1470-1840) (*based on the above mentioned companies' websites*), which typically include everything, what is essential for a volunteer (food, lodging, transportation to/from/within destination, and in some cases working clothes and tools), and often offer a fundraising tool to ask for donation from other members. Due to the low funds, volunteers cannot afford luxuries, and so they will more likely choose the activities available near to their living and working environment. Additionally, as most of the time they are living among locals, they gain a distinct opportunity to become more familiar with their environment. This allows the volunteers to

discover interesting (or even cheap) sites in their direct vicinity, which are not commonly known. In certain cases volunteers can even receive invitation to local families for casual everyday activities (cooking, camping, small celebrations...etc).

Long-term volunteers, especially those staying at private homes often become “adopted” members of the host family for the period of their stay, and while still handled as guests, they will be able to experience the everyday life of the members of the community. This is also a wonderful opportunity for volunteers to develop their language skills for free, and to teach their own languages to the hosts.

As mentioned above, many organizations offer their typically 1-2 weeks-long programs for a fee. Global Volunteers explain, that one’s “employer may match [the participant’s] donation to Global Volunteers, either for [the participant’s] service program fee or a direct gift. Some matching gifts can pay up to $\frac{3}{4}$ of [the participant’s] service program”, which is an example for indirect fundraising, where the volunteer preserves his or her status as a non-paid worker, but still being financially supported by the host company (*source: Global Volunteers*). This is not “pure” volunteering, but more close to VolunTourism, where one buys and tries the experience of volunteering.

Other organizations, however, often serve only as intermediaries in between volunteers and hosts. These companies only manage their members from both sides, and only charge symbolic membership fees – organizing everything else from the transportation to visas, from housing to independent programs is completely up to the volunteer, though they offer some help and guidance in case of need. One of these organizations is WWOOF, through which the case study of the thesis (Hotani Nature Farm) will be introduced in Chapter 4.

As the entire organizing process lays in the responsibility of the volunteers, and it often involves long-distance travelling, the participants typically stay for a longer period in the target country, though the exact locations within the country often change during this time period (Bonneman and MacIntosh, 2006). In the

following chapters the more in-depth details of WWOOF will be described, especially emphasizing the Japanese local organization, WWOOF Japan.

2.2 About WWOOF

The following subchapter is about World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms (WWOOF), which is an organization connecting farm volunteers and hosts. The second part of the subchapter focuses on the local WWOOF of Japan (WOOF Japan).

2.2.1 History of WWOOF and Organization Overview

WWOOF has been founded in 1971 by Sue Coppard in England. The name “WWOOF” was originally the abbreviation of “Working Weekends On Organic Farms”, which reflected the idea behind the program; to provide opportunity for company workers to have a retreat to the countryside, while learning and experiencing the everyday life of farmers. The first programs only consisted of a single weekend with a small number of participants. However, the success of the program caused more and more organic farms and smallholders to join, thus extending the organization to national level.

WWOOF UK has developed and still develops fast, thanks to its focus on providing continuous support to and collecting feedbacks from both hosts and volunteers. Its success has eventually turned it into a global movement, and at present over 50 autonomous WWOOF organizations exist worldwide.

In 2000 for the first time, WWOOF organizations from 15 countries held an international conference, where they established the main rules of conduct and the ethics of WWOOFing by developing general guidelines, and they encouraged the forming of WWOOF organizations in developing countries.

As time passed and WWOOF became a popular movement for international volunteers who would travel abroad for the experience of WWOOFing, the

meaning of the name WWOOF became unsuitable for the organization; the word "work" in the name caused several issues by implying immigrant work or black work. Therefore, finally the name was changed to "World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms".

In 2011, another meeting was held, and as a result of the meeting the Federation of WWOOF Organizations (FOWO) has been prompted to form (*NOTE: according to the provisions, the forming happened in 2013 November and was announced after the present thesis was composed*). FOWO would officially connect all participating WWOOF organizations and WWOOF independents – those farms and smallholders who are from a country without local WWOOF. FOWO's mission statement is:

"The Federation of WWOOF Organizations (FOWO) purpose is to unite, promote, protect and support the WWOOF movement around the world."
(FOWO, 2013 <http://www.woof.net/>)

In Table 2.1 the CEO of FOWO is represented.

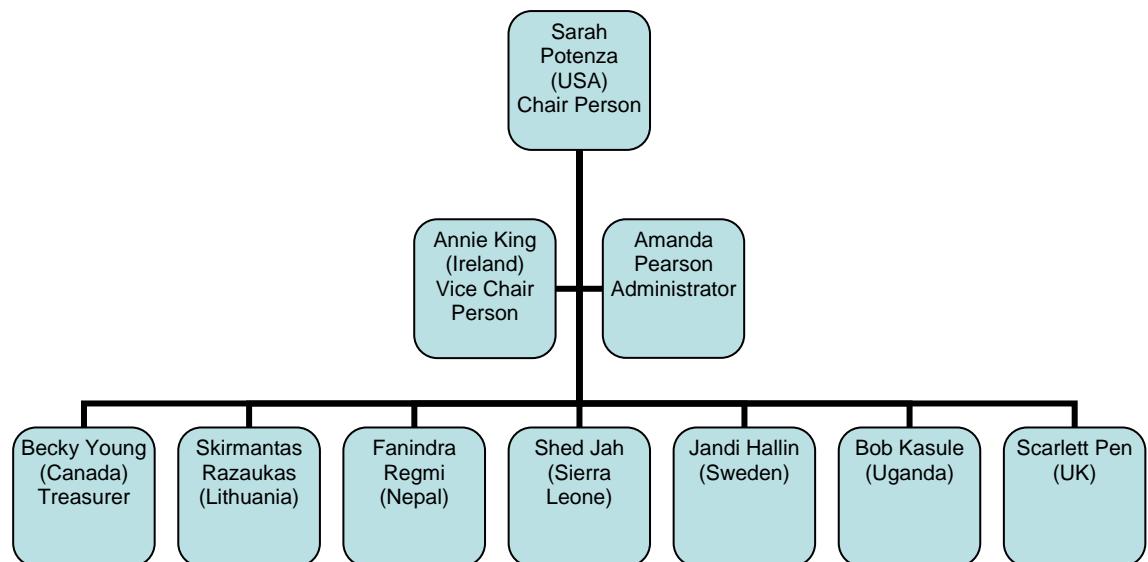


Table 2.1 – CEO of FOWO

Except for the administrator, all members of the CEO are the directors of the WWOOF in their own country therefore inside WOFO they have equal roles.

To participate in WWOOF, one can apply to be a volunteer or a host. Each WWOOF has its own process of becoming either, but the basic rules are the same (source: FOWO, 2013).

To become a volunteer, one has to research the local WWOOF of the destination and join them. Once a member, a WWOOFer can start looking for a farm or other company, which would be suitable for him or her. In some cases, WWOOFers might even travel in pairs, with children or with an entire family; in these cases the chances for finding a host might be more difficult. Once contacting a host, a WWOOFer must negotiate with them about the length of the stay, the dates and other special circumstances before agreeing on the stay. After forming the agreement, the volunteer travels to the farm, and the parties will start their cooperation.

Becoming a host is more difficult, however. First, a host has to join its local WWOOF, which usually means an increased member's fee. The farm has to prove that they are completely organic (no chemicals used at any stage of farming or food processing) and that they are able to host WWOOFers in a proper environment. It is also important, that the host would be ethically trustworthy. During the time of the volunteering, the host is responsible for the volunteer's accommodation and food in exchange for the work provided by the latter on the farm. The host should also be able to instruct the volunteer properly, therefore should always consider the language and tone, especially in case of foreign volunteers. They have to be able to advise the volunteer about the locality around the farm, should they prove to be unfamiliar with the surroundings (WWOOF Japan, 2013).

2.2.2 WWOOF Japan – Introduction and Overview

WWOOF Japan LLP is Japan's local WWOOF organization, with the headquarters residing in Sapporo, Hokkaido. It has at present over 400 farms and other smallholders registered as members from all over Japan.

WWOOF Japan has a very strict monitoring system to aid and protect both volunteers and hosts.

To become a member, one must apply online for a 12-months membership. After the successful application, a ¥5500 (approx. €40) member's fee (for individuals) has to be paid for WWOOF Japan. There is also a possibility for delayed memberships, which will provide the member with access to the database before his or her WWOOFer permit activates, allowing the members to plan well in advance and to be able to use their membership more effectively.

The following delays are available at present: Immediate, 2-weeks delay, 1-month delay, 2-months delay, 3-months delay and 6 months delay (see appendices links: Online application form for WWOOFers).

The base price also changes on depending on the number of children under 16 years of age (up to three children with one adult).

Once the membership started, the WWOOFer is free to participate in WWOOF activities all over the country – however, he or she must present his or her WWOOFer Permit to each host, who will use it for the monthly reporting hosts must prepare for WWOOF Japan. The WWOOFer will receive by email his or her personal ID (consisting of a letter and a 6 digit number) and password, which is centrally generated. The number afterwards is used on the WWOOFer Permit as well for personal identification.

Hosts on the other hand have a yearly fee of ¥8500 (approx. €60), which will activate their membership immediately. They have to register every WWOOFer upon arrival, collect an arrival survey from them and take their WWOOFer permit and passport copy for the monthly report. Another survey is collected before the WWOOFer departs from the farm, and this will be also added to the monthly report.

WWOOF Japan has a strict legal system, which starts with the Rules of Conduct being prompted for acceptance upon each time a registered member signs in. Additionally, this conduct is mailed after each acceptance to the registered email address to ensure, that the members have a possibility to read it in case if there are any changes in the content.

In case of misusing the website or abusing any of the rules, the offender will be notified, charged with a fine, his/her membership will be terminated and he/she will be responsible for all charges if legal processes have to be involved.

WWOOF Japan provides several forums on the official site for members. This helps to volunteers find hosts urgently looking for WWOOFers, or hosts to find WWOOFers, who are specially looking for hosts in certain regions. These small advertisements are also randomly posted on the main page and the search page, and are offered to members based on their search preferences.

Once a WWOOFer contacts a host, they have to inform them about the period of stay and often are required to have a detailed profile page with photos attached. If the host decides to accept the WWOOFer, they provide the WWOOFer with access to the contact information (address and phone number) and transportation details to their establishment. This information is only accessible for a limited amount of time, but new access can be requested again if needed.

Once the WWOOF home-stay is over, the WWOOFer is allowed to leave a feedback and rating on the site about the host, and the host can write a short reply. From international WWOOFers the feedback is written typically in English, while both Japanese and Chinese are commonly used – the hosts on the other hand typically use Japanese for answering and for any other interactions (information based on Hotani Nature Farm's WWOOF profile, accessed in October).

The webpage is available in Japanese and English, with integrated blogs in Taiwanese and French. Most hosts are able to communicate in English at least on basic level, but they usually request the WWOOFer to have basic knowledge in Japanese nevertheless – or at least to be willing to learn some Japanese during their stay with the host. Some establishments might have a preference for Japanese speakers, and might choose according to the Japanese level of the WWOOFer. Other hosts might also have preference based on the length of stay, whether they can accommodate WWOOFers for shorter or longer period. All preferences are pre-set on the hosts and WWOOFers profile pages, which helps both sides to avoid conflicts originating from the hosts' or the WWOOFers' choices. The most important rules are: read everything carefully, communicate

with the hosts with respect and understanding and accept the situation even if it does not satisfy the WWOOFers' expectations (source: WWOOF Japan, <http://www.woofjapan.com>).

2.2.3 Personal Experience with the Organization

When I first registered on WWOOF Japan during March 2013, it seemed to me like a straightforward system with clear instructions. At the time, the previous version of the website was in use, and though in some parts the English was literally translated from Japanese, it was still understandable. Once submitting the application form, I received the detailed instructions for making the payment of the members' fee, which I paid by PayPal. The process was fast, and I received a confirmation of the payment within a couple of minutes. As I was planning to go to Japan in June, I requested a delayed membership starting within three months.

I was previously already browsing among the farms, as WWOOF Japan provided a preview on host organizations to non-members as well. I found the one farm I was particularly interested in (mostly because of its location). What worried me at that time was the description of the farm, which stated that they are mostly Japanese speakers. Though I have been studying Japanese, and have been living in the same area within Japan before, I was not confident in my skills. In the end, the message which I sent them was written in English.

The answer was surprising. In Japanese, the owner of the farm has expressed his avow towards all the other languages I speak, and I was requested to continue to write in Japanese for the sake of the other non-English speaking workers of the farm. They accepted me right away, and provided me with all the necessary information needed for my stay at Hotani Nature Farm.

Before the WWOOFing period started, the farm was in contact with me, sending updates on my trip and useful information for the transportation between the airport and the farm. Before I departed, I also received some information

regarding my roommate-to-be and what the farm looks like, so I could be prepared for the weather and environment. They also sent a list of tools and clothes what I was expected to bring with me.

Upon arrival to Japan, there was a small difficulty; I changed the mode of transportation to the farm, which was also meant to change the station where the host was supposed to pick me up. As the email of the host was improperly saved in my mobile phone, I could not contact the host until I already have arrived to the station. Luckily, one of my Japanese friends was working there and he helped me to call my host, who then drove me home from the new location.

Once arriving to the farm, my passport and permit was asked immediately, and I received a survey about myself, possible sicknesses or allergies and other information regarding my personal preferences and language knowledge. I was asked, whether I have all the necessary clothes and tools I was requested to bring with me, and I was told of the basic house rules.

During the two and half months I spent at the farm, I saw this process through many times, as there were lots of short-term stays among WWOOFers.

Before leaving the farm, I was given another survey, where they were asking my experience about the stay. They were also taking a Polaroid picture of me, what the farm used for their own tableau of WWOOFers.

Once I arrived back to Hungary, I submitted my positive feedback on the WWOOF website.

To summarize the trip from the formalities' point of view, the farm was very appropriate in following all rules and processes. During my stay I witnessed some difficulties, where WWOOFers did not arrived in the approved time or left the farm on a short notice. In some cases there were difficulties where a WWOOFer was demanding payment or services for their stay, or could not accept the house rules (it often caused problems for WWOOFers to prepare their own meals, though the host made it clear on his page that this is what they expect from WWOOFers).

3 JAPAN AS DESTINATION

In the following chapter Japan will be analysed as a tourism destination from both international and national point of view. The second part of the chapter carries out the survey filled out by 15 WWOOFers visiting Hotani Nature Farm. The results of the survey are reflected on the theoretical part, showing whether the targeted WWOOFers are similar to leisure tourists or are different from them in motivations and expectations.

3.1 Tourism in Japan – General Overview

“If I want to imagine a fictive nation, I can give it an invented name, treat it declaratively as a novelistic object, create a new Garabagne, so as to compromise no real country by my fantasy (though in no way claiming to represent or to analyse reality itself (these being the major gestures of Western discourse) – isolate somewhere in the world (faraway) a certain number of features (a term employed in linguistics), and out of these features deliberately form a system. It is the system I shall call: Japan.”

(Barthes, 1970)

3.1.1 General Attractions and Expectations

Japan is a country lying in South-East Asia. It is both geographically and culturally isolated from the Asian mainland (its territory is completely surrounded by Ocean), and is therefore a subject to a long-lasting historical interest of the West – the mythical “Far East”. As Japan is not only distinct from the Western countries, but also from Asian countries, it is both exciting and difficult to try to understand and experience it.

Nowadays reaching Japan by airplane or via one of its marine ports is not particularly expensive (an airplane return ticket from Europe can cost as little as

€600 (source: KLM) and travelling around the country is easy and safe (Japan was declared as the “Safest Country in the World” in 2010, and momentarily is still the 6th most peaceful country in the world (source: Vision of Humanity, 2013). Despite these facts, however, Japan still has a low number of incoming tourists; compared to France (83 million), Germany (69,3 million), and the United States (67 million), the number of foreign visitors to Japan was only 8,4 million in 2012 (sources: JNTO, 2012, DRV, 2012 and ITA, 2012).

Based on the notes of Berger (2010), there are several popular forms of tourism, which are “of the most common kinds of tourism applicable for Japan”:

- Cultural tourism
- Adventure tourism and Sports tourism
- Ecotourism
- (Family tourism)
- Food tourism
- Sex tourism and
- Disaster tourism.

Cultural tourism includes the images of “classical Japan” and “popular Japan”: everything from visiting temples in Kyoto to playing arcade games in Tokyo.

Adventure and sports tourism has several key elements, such as winter sports in the Japanese Alps, climbing on Mt Fuji or kayaking at the Osaka bay.

Ecotourism (which is an important factor in relation with volunteering) includes visiting the countryside and isolated forest areas of Japan – which there are many.

Family tourism is important for Japanese people, but it has little relation to international tourism, and therefore will not be discussed further in this thesis.

Food tourism is another important factor. Japanese are widely known from their distinct cuisine all around the world, especially the habit of consuming raw seafood, the wide usage of seaweed and soy beans, and their strict differentiation between several hundreds of rice species. However, they are also known from producing exceptionally good quality food materials which attract tourists despite of their often high price.

Sex tourism unfortunately still draws a large number of locals and tourists. However, due to its nature, it will not be discussed any further in this thesis.

Disaster tourism is yet another important aspect when discussing about volunteers. Japan's tectonic layers cause a high number of earthquakes every year – which directly relates to the number of tsunamis as well. Though in most cases these are only small shocks, extreme cases (including the 2011 disaster) often lead to mass catastrophe. Japan faces another regular weather problem as well; typhoons. They are known to happen all around South-east Asia and the Pacific, and though in most cases it does not cause personal injuries, the strong wind and rain can cause severe damages in agriculture every year. Fortunately, Japan employs a very efficient alarm system, which allows residents to be prepared for disasters in advance – besides training citizens from young age for the behaviour in case of danger (Berger 2010).

Another aspect for tourists is the destination within the country. The three most visited areas of Japan are Kanto (Tokyo and surroundings), Kansai (Kyoto, Osaka, Kobe and Nara) and the island of Okinawa.

Kansai is referred to as the cultural centre of Japan. Two of the former capitals (Nara and Kyoto) lay here, and the safest Japanese ports (cities found in Osaka bay) are also belonging to this area. Kyoto often makes people think of spiritualism and religion, and tourists come here to experience the cherry blossom viewing, the festivals, the Geisha, tea ceremonies, Christmas illuminations, the *momiji* (紅葉) tree leaves at autumn, musical and theatrical events and sumo. As the landscape of the city is still very traditional (especially

outside of the city centre), both tourists and locals often visit Kyoto for taking pictures of “the book of Japan”; the image what most people expect to connect Japan with. Nara is yet another very traditional city, also known from the large population of the Japanese Shika deer ((*lat.*) *Cervus nippon* or 鹿), which freely roam and reside in every park area of the city. Kansai has a strongly urban culture as well, as both Osaka and Kobe are cities of commerce and business.

Kanto, on the other hand, is the centre of modernism and contemporary culture. The local dialect (which has a well-known rivalry with the Kansai dialect) is considered as official Japanese. There are a number of large cities, out of which the two largest are Tokyo and Yokohama. The typical picture of Tokyo (which is also often depicted in popular media) includes high-speed trains, streets full of busy businessmen in identical suits, heavy traffic, giant neon-lit signs and advertisements and skyscrapers. The shopping districts attract a large number of tourists to spend their money on clothes, electronics, printed and electronic media and food. Tokyo is the symbol of modern Japan coexisting with Kyoto, the symbol of traditional Japan – both which the Japanese are proud of (*sources: JNTO; Japan Travel Guide*).

On the third place, Okinawa is a historically interesting archipelago. Not only is it the tropical island of Japan, but also the home of the Okinawan people, the Ryukyu, who are a distinct race from Japanese with their own culture and language (McCormack and Norimatsu, 2012). In Okinawa, there are still large areas of natural rainforests and an always accommodating climate.

One of the most attracting aspects of Japan, however, is the transportation. Despite the high costs of accessing even a local bus, the service, speed and exceptional punctuality makes local transport in Japan memorable. The following important modes of transportation are especially notable:

- Train- and underground network and bus lines
- High-speed train (*shinkansen* or 新幹線)

- Long-distance (night) bus lines
- Taxi and
- Air- and water transportation

The train- and underground network is a well-connected and well-scheduled multi-corporal network with distance-based ticket pricing. Once approaching to a ticket vending machine (or a live cashier), one can buy their ticket from any station to another, even if it means changing the transportation company in the meantime. The price of the ticket is depending on how many zones one passes through and how many different companies one avails oneself of. Despite JR (Japanese Railways) being the leading and government owned company all over Japan, every city and region has several other companies operating trains and buses alike (Shoji, 2001). Certain tickets also entitle one to take a bus and a train from the same company, but in these cases changing the company before reaching the final distance is not available or requires the purchase of a new ticket (which includes a small fine if done after passing the control zone when entering the transfer area). Many tourists find this network system confusing, especially if one tries to take a train without any knowledge of Japanese language or knowing the culture. Fortunately, among the service one can usually find an English speaker, or at least someone who tries to help in case of ticketing difficulties.

The high-speed train network is one of the icons of modern Japan. It operates between the North and South, and though it costs often the double or triple of a normal train ride, its convenience and speed usually attracts tourists. For locals, it is essential, due to the large amount of workers and students, who travel long distances daily between their home and workplace/school (JR Central, 2010).

Long-distance bus lines (often operating overnight) are the other side of the coin – they take a long time to arrive from one destination to the other, but the ticket

prices are very low, and they do not interrupt their journey between the city of departure and the destination.

Taxi service, compared to other countries, is very expensive. However, as all services in Japan, this is also very customer-oriented. No matter the look or the race, the gender or the occupation, taxi drivers treat everyone with respect.

Air- and water traffic is significant in Japan; however, tourists rarely use airplanes, cruisers or ferries for travelling inside of the country. The two air routes commonly used by tourists are between Osaka and Tokyo and between Tokyo and Okinawa. Cruise ships are mostly used when transporting visiting tourists to and from the country, and ferries are mostly used to transport tourists and locals between China, South-Korea and Japan.

3.1.2 Tourist Types

Japan, due to its nationalistic attitude, still faces troubles dealing with internationality. Even though Japan is a known and safe tourism destination, the number of international arrivals is still relatively low compared to other countries. The following subchapters are analysing the international tourists in Japan and introduces the domestic tourism.

3.1.2.1 International Tourists

According to the report of Japanese National Tourism Organization (appendix 2), the 10 countries sending the most visitors to Japan were:

- South-Korea
- Taiwan
- China
- USA

- Hong Kong
- Thailand
- Australia
- United Kingdom
- Singapore
- Canada

From the above countries, over half of the tourists are generated by the direct neighbours of Japan (South-Korea, Taiwan and China), summing 4,9 million out of the total 8,4 million. Most of these tourists either have Japanese ancestry, or are connected to Japan by family or businesswise (JNTO, 2012).

Many Americans travel to Japan for working holiday, teaching English language for 12-24 months. It is also one of the cheapest possibilities for them to leave the country to a non-English speaking destination (though France is still the most popular destination for American citizens) (sources: JET Programme, 2013 and ITA, 2011).

As for Australia, the closeness of Japan is a big attraction.

From the European countries, the first five are the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy and Russia. Out of these countries the first three have special visa agreements with Japan (MOFA, 2013); therefore for them a long-term stay is less complicated than to other European nationalities. The other factors are the stable economy and the large population, which allow the countries to generate this amount of tourists.

3.1.2.2 Domestic Tourists

Japanese travel a lot during their lifetime; however, only a small part of it can be described as leisure tourism. Japanese often go on business trips around the

country or visiting relatives, especially in case of family events (wedding, funeral...etc).

However, Japanese tend to visit festivals and events in their free time. Partially for socializing; partially for the special dishes served at time of festivals; partially for being able to dress up festively and often to national costumes. When Japanese travel alone to another city (especially to Kyoto), it is often for religious ceremonies performed on the individuals, groups or even on personal belongings.

Japanese are also very nature-oriented and are willing to spend time on the countryside, just for the awe of landscapes and scenery (Siegendhaler, 1999).

Often Japanese are travelling long distances for shopping (especially to Osaka or Tokyo); and often city people travel to the countryside to relax. Especially Japanese bath, the *onsen* (温泉) attracts people to spend some time relaxing after work.

3.2 Research: WWOOF Volunteers in Japan

This partially qualitative and partially quantitative research is targeting formal local and international WWOOF and non-WWOOF volunteers I encountered during the two and half months I have spent at Hotani Nature Farm. The research is intended to find out the reasons and motivations behind their choice to visit Japan, to participate in WWOOF, the time spent in the country and on this program, and they were asked for feedback on the trip.

In the last part of this chapter the part of the survey will be analysed, which addresses the above questions and compares them with the theoretical background.

The third part of the questionnaire is connected to Chapter 4, therefore that part is analysed there.

The questionnaire consists of 32 questions in three parts: general questions, questions regarding Japan as a destination and questions regarding Hotani Nature Farm and WWOOFing. The number of filled surveys is 15.

3.2.1 Description of Target Group

The target group's age is between 20 and 40. They are from both genders. Their professional status is varying, but the majority are students. The volunteers are coming from several countries of two different continents – Asia and Europe.

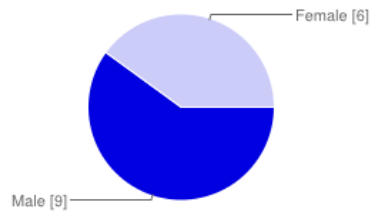
All the WWOOFers are foreigners and all the non-WWOOFer volunteers are locals. Despite the low number of surveys, it is hoped that the results can be compared to the Japanese leisure tourism trends introduced in the beginning of the chapter and the volunteer tourism trends described in Chapter 2.

3.2.2 Results of Research

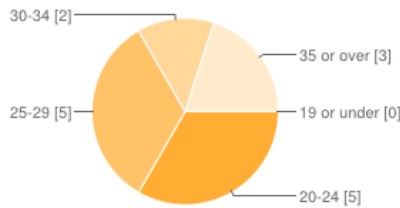
Several questions have lower amount of answers than the total number of questionnaires, as questions regarding the stay in Japan is irrelevant for Japanese citizens. Other questions might have smaller amount of total answers, as answering some of the questions was not compulsory and proceeding to certain questions required specific answers from previous ones (for example “Have you been visiting Japan before?” – if the answer was yes, the answerer could proceed to the next question: “how many times?”). Finally, several questions were multiple choice ones, therefore there are more than 15 answers received for these questions.

General questions:

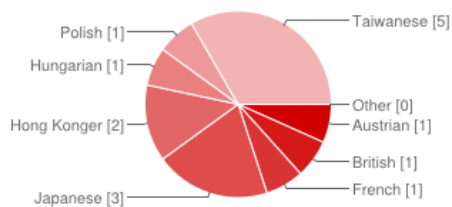
1. Age, Gender and Nationality

Gender

Male	9	60%
Female	6	40%

Age

19 or under	0	0%
20-24	5	33%
25-29	5	33%
30-34	2	13%
35 or over	3	20%

Nationality

Austrian	1	7%
British	1	7%
French	1	7%
Japanese	3	20%
Hong Konger	2	13%
Hungarian	1	7%
Polish	1	7%
Taiwanese	5	33%
Other	0	0%

Table 3.2 – Age, Gender and Nationality of WWOOFers

It is shown on the gender, that the answer providers were mostly males. However, this result is opposing with the actual experiences on the farm, where the majority of the volunteers were women. However, the difference is little, which shows that the number of male and female volunteers is practically equal.

Most of the WWOOF volunteers belong to the age group between 20 and 30; this accounts for over 60% of the total number of respondents. This result correlates with the Occupation chart carried out below. This age category is typically still studying, and this explains why most of the volunteers are students (at least the ones volunteering during the summer).

The vast majority of the volunteers are from Asia, more particularly from Taiwan. Naturally, the three local volunteer are Japanese, although there are several Japanese citizens participating WWOOF as volunteers. During summer 2013,

Hotani Nature Farm accommodated four Japanese citizens, three males and one female. The WWOOFers from Europe, however, came from various locations from Western- and Central-Europe. This might indicate that these countries have a high enough average income to be able to participate in such programs.

2. Occupation

Occupation

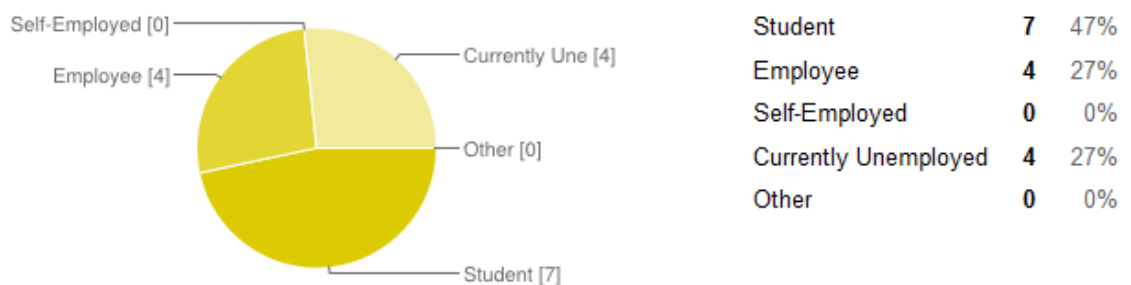


Table 3.3 – Occupation of WWOOFers

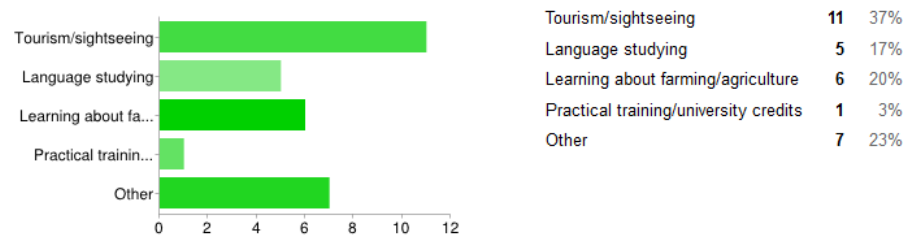
The occupation chart indicates that the majority of volunteers are students. When asked to specify the field of study or line of work, most students identified themselves as liberal arts undergraduates (mainly English or Japanese language). As for the line of work, surprisingly, many of the employees have declared a job directly relating to computer technology. It can be assumed, that someone spending long hours at office, especially in front of a computer screen might have a stronger need for outdoor physical work, than those working with people directly every day, or having a job allowing them to work outside of their office more regularly.

Stay in Japan

As the three Japanese citizens mostly did not provide answers for the questions of this category, only the 12 WWOOFer answers will account towards the majority of the results. In those questions, where the Japanese results are accountable, this will be indicated.

1. Purpose of travel and Japanese language level

Purpose of travel



Japanese language level

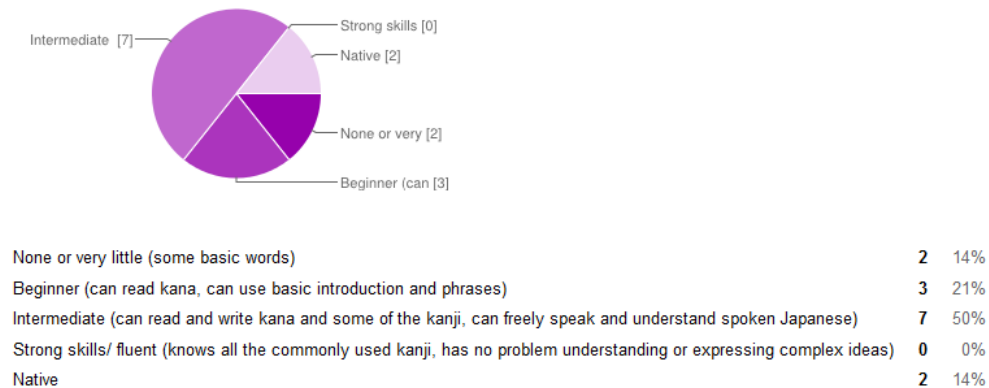


Table 3.4 – Purpose of travel and Japanese language level

Based on the answers given for the purpose of travel, almost all answers were indicating tourism as a reason (one answer was “experience the culture” under “Other”, respectively). Learning about farming was proven to be a popular reason specifically among male responders (four out of six respondents were male), and among the ones answered with Language studies the majority were the liberal art students (three out of five; four out of five students). Two Japanese language students were indicating that their trip had the purpose of gaining university credits after this trip – one of the answers was provided below the category “Other”. Among the other reasons were “visiting friends” and “mid-life crisis”, latter received from one of the European man in his thirties – providing an interesting perspective on the answers for this question.

For Japanese language level (prior travelling) the answers indicated, that most of the volunteers had intermediate skills, therefore were able to communicate with local people verbally and in written format.

2. Previous visits to Japan

Have you been visiting Japan before?

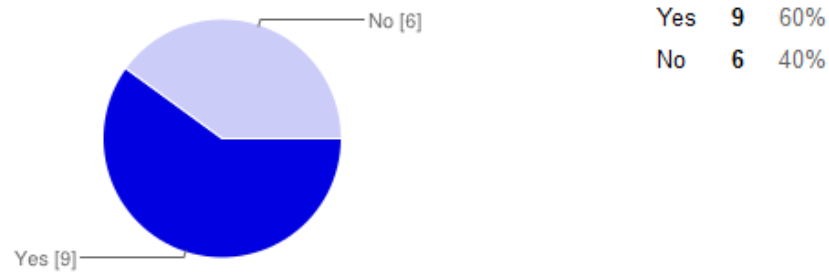


Table 3.5 - WWOOFers' previous visits in Japan

Excluding the answer from the three Japanese citizens, we can conclude that the amount of first-time travellers and returnees are the same. This, however, also includes data from responders, who have returned to Japan after a short visit to South-Korea, due to otherwise expiring visa.

Tourist visa-free entries of the citizens listed in this questionnaire (with the exception of the one UK citizen) last for three months, and can be only renewed if the foreign citizen leaves the country before this period expires. Upon returning, the individual is entitled for another three months and will be required to return to their country of origin for an extended period of time again in order to avoid being subjected to suspicion (the Japanese foreign policies are very strict and allow only a small number of long-term immigrants under special circumstances to Japan).

However, even with taking the above circumstance into consideration, there is still only a little difference between the number of first-time visitors and returnees.

Regarding the number of previous visits, only one Taiwanese WWOOFer reported two visits, every other respondent reported one.

3. "Why did you choose Japan as a destination for your holiday?"

Out of the answers for the above question the key answers were:

- Japan is safe for individual travellers
- For Asians, Japan is a nearby destination with easy access by air

- Influence from Japanese media (anime, manga)
- Cultural influence of country of origin (Taiwanese citizens)
- Experiencing Japanese culture and
- Japanese language practice

These answers are overlapping and also supporting the answers given on the previous multiple choice question regarding the purpose of stay. One answer from a Taiwanese girl was reflecting her desire to see places that her nanny has seen before, as the lady has passed away recently. This unique circumstance proved to be an interesting driving force gaining a special interest in Japanese culture.

4. “How much did you know about Japan prior your travel?”

The answers of this question showed, that most of the volunteers either were not familiar with Japan, or relied on previous information gathered via public media and university studies. Thus, they were aware of certain peculiar aspects of Japan and Japanese people, they learnt about the culture, but they have never been able to develop their personal point of view. Only one Taiwanese man stated his knowledge about Japan as being “like a half-blood Japanese”.

5. What were your expectations about Japan? How was the experience different from you expectations?

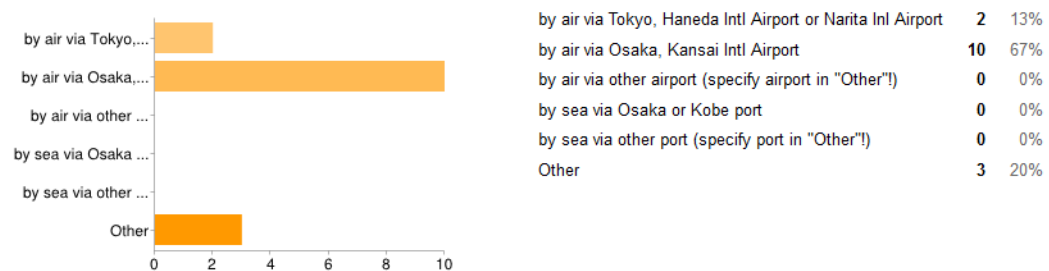
Most respondent mentioned Japanese politeness and Japanese people’s ability of being “nice” and friendly. Expectations were also about seeing the “business” of Japanese cities and Japanese people’s obedience towards rules. Respondents were also mentioning the desire of seeing a completely different culture.

As for actual experience, most of the Asian respondents claimed that Japan lived up to their expectations, based on the previous image they had about it. On the other hand, European respondents had the tendency of expressing their amazement and surprise, though previously denying having expectations

towards Japan at all. However, experiencing the Japanese xenophobic nature (being friendly but staying distant from foreigners and strangers) has been somewhat shocking to most of the WWOOFers. This is one face of Japan which is very hard to penetrate and to cope with, and therefore it is not surprising that WWOOFers have found it difficult to deal with (Berger, 2010).

6. Arrival port to Japan

How did you arrive to Japan?



Did you come directly from your country?

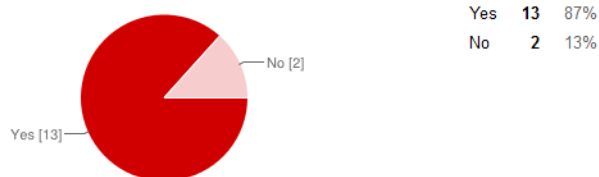


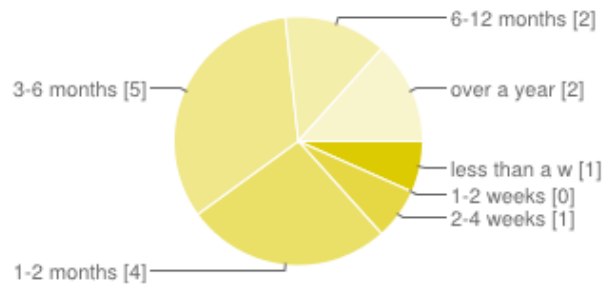
Table 3.6 – Arrival to Japan

As the arrival chart shows, most WWOOFers at Hotani Nature Farm arrived via Kansai International Airport in Osaka. This is most probably due to the fact that many of the volunteers started their holiday at Hotani Nature Farm before travelling further in Japan. The two responders arriving via Tokyo, however, were both WWOOFing at several other hosts before staying at Hotani Nature Farm.

Most of the volunteers arriving to Japan had their holiday exclusively limited to Japan. However, the one British respondent arrived to Japan as a part of a seven-month long journey around South-East Asia, and several other WWOOFers interrupted their longer travel around Japan to visit South-Korea.

7. Length of stay in Japan

How long have you been staying in Japan?



less than a week	1	7%
1-2 weeks	0	0%
2-4 weeks	1	7%
1-2 months	4	27%
3-6 months	5	33%
6-12 months	2	13%
over a year	2	13%

Table 3.7 – WWOOFers' length of stay in Japan

Based on the answers of WWOOFers, all volunteers were staying at least two weeks and at most 12 months in Japan. Almost $\frac{2}{3}$ of the respondents were stating a period of stay between one to six months and almost half of them a period of three to six months. To draw a conclusion, most of the volunteers had an extended stay including their entire summer vacation or even exceeding it.

8. Cities visited while in Japan

Which cities have you been visiting?

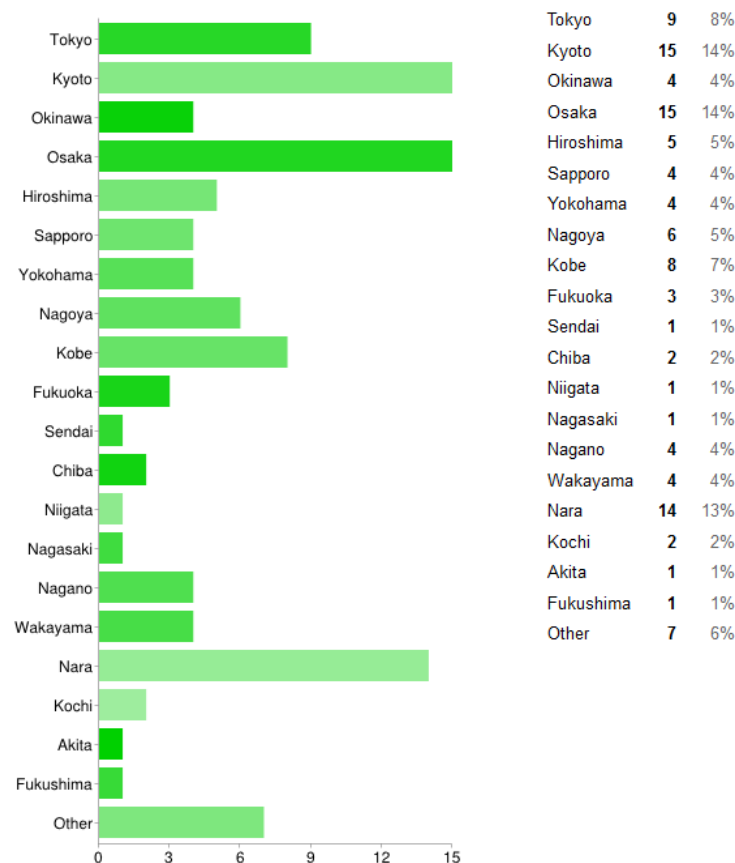


Table 3.8 – Most visited cities in Japan by WWOOFers

The list of visited cities was compiled of the 20 most highly populated Japanese cities in 2010 (*source: Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications*).

The answers reflect the arrival port for most volunteers, as cities of and nearby Kansai area were chosen by most, if not all of the respondents (Osaka, Kyoto, Nara, Kobe). Probably due to its status as the capital city, Tokyo was also visited by most of the respondents. Other popular cities were (visitors): Nagoya (6), Hiroshima (5), Okinawa (4), Sapporo (4), Yokohama (4), Nagano (4) and Wakayama (4). Nagoya and Yokohama being major ports and the second and fourth largest cities of Japan are obvious choice for tourists to visit. Also, Yokohama can be found next to Tokyo sharing the same bay, therefore those who visit Tokyo can easily visit Yokohama as well. Sapporo is the fifth largest city, and it is the northernmost large city lying on the island Hokkaido. It is also well-known for its annual snow festival, the *Yuki Matsuri* (雪祭り). Hiroshima attracts tourists due to its history connecting to World War II. Nagano and Wakayama has their own historical uniqueness as well, especially because of the traditional architecture. Finally, Okinawa is the typical tropical island of Japan, therefore a very popular tourist destination, especially during winter (JNTO).

9. “Write down your favourite feature about Japan!”

The most popular answers on this question were:

- Food
- Festivals
- Popular media
- Traditional clothing
- Japanese people

Regarding the food, almost everyone has mentioned the outstanding quality of Japanese goods. Some of the respondents connected the experience to the vegetables grown at the farm.

Festivals were really common during the summer, especially in the vicinity of Kyoto. Festivals are also one of the very typical characteristics of Japan, attracting thousands of people – during summer this is especially true for the

fireworks in August, which allows Japanese to wear their traditional summer robes, the *yukata* (浴衣) (JNTO).

Popular media, such as Japanese pop music, anime (Japanese cartoon), manga (Japanese comics), Japanese video games or Japanese television shows are attracting a special subculture; in Japan they are called *otaku* (オタク), for which the best translation is “geek” or “nerd”. Japanese do not regard this subculture highly, however, in big cities entire shopping districts are built to serve them (like Akihabara district in Tokyo – in slang, also called as “*Akiba-kei*” or 秋葉系).

Traditional clothing is especially popular among women, and mostly refers to *kimono* (着物). Especially in second-hand stores (in Japanese *risaikuru* or リサイクル) it is inexpensive to buy one, however, tourists are often not aware of the complexity of all the necessary accessories of wearing the entire *kimono* garnet (source: Ryouhin Kaikan).

Regarding Japanese people, the responders especially emphasized their kindness, politeness, seriousness, rule obedience and hard working attitude.

10. “Write down one thing you didn't like/found strange while visiting Japan!”

There has been a really large pool of different answers provided on this question. However, the several answers which relate to earlier comments are:

- Communication differences and language issues
- Expensiveness
- The extremeness of perfect appearance

The communication issues cover the fact, that Japanese language by nature is an emitting and implying language. This means that while in European languages certain complex ideas are expressed using an extended vocabulary, Japanese uses a peculiar verb conjugation system, where the ending of the verb can change the entire meaning of a sentence. This also causes the difficulty for a Japanese native to express his or her thoughts in English, often emitting or implying the actual point of the conversation (Andrade and Williams, 2009). In the language, “yes” and “no” has no strict meaning, and “yes” can mean “maybe” or “no” – and vice versa. This is a confusing circumstance, especially for

speakers of European languages, where expressing even simple thoughts might mean to engage in a long speech.

Expensiveness is a matter of comparison. However, it is true that clothes, certain types of food (especially meat products and fresh fruit), electronics and transportation costs are comparably more expensive than in most countries in Europe and Asia (often even compared to Finland).

The third point is a strange cultural phenomenon in Japan, which can easily discomfort foreigners. For a Japanese person to appear publicly (even if it is as insignificant as shopping for grocery) the entire appearance has to be proper and flawless. This does not only mean clean clothes and brushed hair, it means a long process involving dressing, preparing make-up and in general getting themselves ready for the outside world; which is the extreme opposite of the culture in Finland and distinct of other European cultures as well. For volunteers, this was a very discomforting fact, as after long hours working on the fields in hot weather, it was very difficult to blend in to this perfectionist environment.

Some other solitary comments were mentioning the absence of convenient ATMs, the difficulty of Japanese train- and subway networks (several private company mixing with the government-owned JR) and the absence of 24/7 shops. These comments, however, are very country specific, thus reflecting those elements of their usual environment (home country), which they are accustomed to and experiencing difficulties when adapting to a different routine.

11. Overall travel experience

Overall travel experience

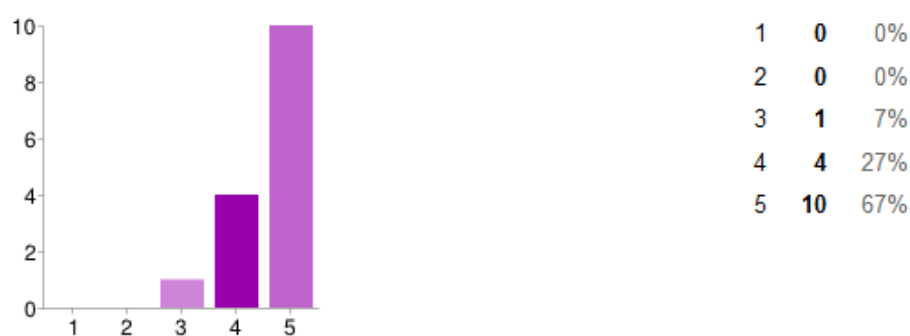


Table 3.9 – Overall travel experience (1=worst, 5=best)

As for the overall travel experience (regarding the entire period spent in Japan), most WWOOFers had positive experiences, with the majority (75%) rating their

trip with the highest grade “5” on a scale from 1-5, “1” standing for the lowest and “5” indicating the highest possible given grade. *(Note: one of each ratings were disregarded, as these were given by the local volunteers)*

3.3 Conclusions

Most of the volunteers, though spending a longer time in Japan, were similar to leisure tourists from professional point of view (OSF, 2013). Most of their perceptions, expectations and experiences overlap with the interests of the tourists arriving for short-term vacations. Even though they gain a special point of view on the life of Japanese people, most of them will still behave as a foreigner and will expect the same in return; even though the expectations include lower expenditures, than leisure tourist encounter.

However, WWOOF volunteers seem to engage in activities preferred by Japanese domestic tourists (kimono wearing, festival visits, visiting the countryside...etc.). For example, traditional clothing, though easily available for international leisure tourists, is more likely to be worn by those, who can afford to stay longer in Japan and have the means of learning to wear kimono from locals. As volunteers stay long enough and live among Japanese, this is a unique opportunity to engage similar hobbies, activities and interests as domestic tourists do.

In short, WWOOFers enjoy the advantages of being a volunteer as a worker (learning and experiencing, Chapter 2) and being both a leisure tourist (pursuing the typical activities of international visitors, Chapter 3) and a “domestic” tourist (having access to local products and knowledge about less known destinations).

4 CASE STUDY: HOTANI NATURE FARM

As mentioned in the introduction, I spent three months at Hotani Nature Farm during the summer of 2013. The following chapter introduces the farm, its staff and involvement in volunteering and WWOOF activities. In the second part of the chapter the corresponding part of the WWOOFer survey will be carried out. Finally, the chapter is concluded by the comparison of the survey results and the initial goal of the thesis.

All data regarding the farm was provided by Oshima Teppei based on a written interview. All statistical data was provided as a form of answer, except for the chart regarding WWOOFer stays at the farm (Appendix 2.)

4.1 Brief history of Hotani Nature Farm

Hotani Nature Farm was established in 2006 by Harumi Kamitake, after his early retirement. He joined a local group studying about environmental issues, such as global warming and reducing city waste. However, he became disappointed seeing that most of the people at the meetings are not really devoting themselves to these problems and interested only in discussions. He then decided to retreat to his own farm and start living organically.

Mr. Kamitake created a farming environment in the agglomeration of Hirakata city called Hotani. There were already many farmers living in this area, but Mr Kamitake was the only one who decided to do everything in an organic way. He finds this lifestyle hard and tiresome, but more so physically than mentally; he is happy despite the difficulties and the heavy work. Compared to his earlier lifestyle, he prefers the one at present – as a salary man he was unable to feel real success, as despite the continuous overtime work, the company's financial situation did not get better. Unfortunately, the company has become yet another victim of the Japanese economical depression after the “Bubble economy” of the

80's (Barsky, 2009); and fortunately, this was proven to lead Mr. Kamitake's life towards a different (and seemingly better) future.

On June 4, 2013 Mr. Kamitake established a farm company to be able to officially hire employees.

4.2 Workers on Hotani Nature Farm

Harumi Kamitake and his wife, Miyuki are the owners of the farm. They have three children; however, they all live with their own family now in other cities of the country.

In April 2009, the first volunteer named Mr Ishii (石井) started to help to the Kamitake family on the farm. He was a trainee at the farm and kept helping there until March 2010.

In September 2009, another volunteer arrived to the farm. Hiroaki Minami (南広明), who was and still is a local to Hotani, became the first regular "staff member" – at the time "staff" meant a non-official workforce, who were frequently volunteering to help without receiving financial reimbursement. He kept helping at the farm until June 2013, when he was finally hired officially as a staff member.

Besides Mr Minami, the farm employs two more full-time and one part-time staff member: Mr Teppei Oshima (大島哲平) since April 2010 as a volunteer, June 2013 as a full-time paid employee; Ms Naoko Ozaki (尾崎尚子) since January 2013 as a volunteer, June 2013 as a full-time employee; and Mr Takashi Shimokawa (下川隆史) since September 2013 as a part-time employee.

In the farm, official staff works 6 days per week and roughly 8 hours per day. However, staff members often stay much longer to help finishing the day's work or to prepare for the next day, especially when the weather restricts certain tasks to be done at other times (for example, when harvest should be finished before it rains or when the plants have to be protected from a previously forecasted typhoon). It has to be mentioned here, that unlike the European customs, in

Japan working overtime is not compulsory for the workers, but it is customary and reflects Japanese people's commitment to their job and company.

Besides the official staff, there are five more regular volunteers on the farm: Mr Ozeki (尾関) who helps almost every day at the farm; Mrs Ono (大野) who helps once or twice a week; Mr Ishida (石田) who helps once a week; Mr Nakatani (仲谷) who helps once a week; and Mr Oshima (大島), the father of Mr Teppei Oshima, who also helps once a week at the farm.

The first of the local volunteers as a regular, but not staff-like helper was Mr Ishida, who is working in the urban part of Hirakata city. After Mr Kamitake started farming, he was introduced by the government to several residents of the city, who were interested in farming. They paid a visit at the farm, and Mr Ishida was among them. He came to like the farm and the environment, and ever since he kept visiting the farm once a week to work with Mr Kamitake and his staff.

At Hotani Nature Farm, managing volunteers is a difficult task. In the process, scheduling is one of the most important steps. It is always essential that when preparing a schedule, Mr Kamitake and the staff would be both aware of the number of volunteers for each day, especially on Mondays and Thursdays, when there is more work to do – on these days the farm has to prepare their products for the supermarkets in the city.

Regardless, every volunteer can choose their work days, and the staff members can also choose their day-off.

4.3 Hotani Nature Farm and WWOOF

In July 2009, one of the volunteers told to Mr Kamitake about WWOOF Japan and recommended him to join the program. Mr Kamitake took the advice, and received the first WWOOFer during the same month.

4.4 Changes and development of facilities and equipment

During the four years of accepting volunteers at the farm, Mr Kamitake and his wife both worked a lot to change old facilities and to install new ones for WWOOFers to use. Upstairs, one of the living areas was furnished to accommodate six WWOOFers at the same time (two in each of the three rooms). These rooms are all equipped with air conditioning (which is used both as cooler and heater) and since last summer all are equipped with fans. There are two two-story beds in two rooms ("Pansy" and "Cosmos" rooms) on the right and two separate single bed in the room on the right ("Sunflower" room). Furthermore, all rooms and facilities have floor heating installed.

The WWOOFers and volunteers share the rest of the facilities: an outdoor toilet and the shared apartment where the kitchen, the shower and the television room can be found. The kitchen is fully equipped with both cooking and dining tools, including several electric equipments (mixer, rice cooker...etc.). The shower has two parts, one with the washing machine, and the other with the two showers and bathtub. The water is electrically heated through one shower; the bathtub and the other shower, however, carries the water heated in the large wooden furnace in the yard. The television room is equipped with a TV-set and about 100 books in three or four different languages about different topics (comics, cooking books, travel guides...etc.) and a small netbook. The photo tableau made of pictures of former WWOOFers can also be found here. In the entire small area there is wireless internet available for WWOOFers and staff to use freely. One of the most recent installations to the common area is the new fridge and the fan, both acquired during the summer 2013 for the request of WWOOFers.

Besides the everyday tools, the farm also can provide a large scale of working equipment (rubber boots, gloves, raincoats...etc.) for the WWOOFers.

4.4.1 Numbers and costs; economic aspect

At present, the average number of WWOOFers in the farm is 3-4 per day, and about 10 WWOOFers per month (including new arrivals, departures and currently hosted ones). This results an average of ¥60,000 monthly expenditure (¥162,000/year/WWOOFer) on WWOOFers per group. In comparison, the minimum income in Osaka prefecture is ¥38,400 for a week (¥800/hr*8hrs/day*6day/week), which equals a ¥1,996,800/year/employee. From this it can be seen that having a full-time employee costs ten times as much as having a WWOOFer helping on the farm (though naturally, a volunteer cannot replace a full-time employee, who both professionally and in experience is superior to the average WWOOFer or volunteer). In Euros, the yearly cost of a WWOOFer would be approximately €1,160 and a yearly cost of an employee is approximately €14,320 (*numbers based on the personal interview with the host*).

Being a WWOOF host also include the annual host members' fee for WWOOF (mentioned in Chapter 2) Japan and a monthly report on the WWOOFers hosted at the farm (including the arrival- and departure surveys, basic information, copies of passports, WWOOFer Permits and host feedback forms). According to the statement of Mr Oshima, however, hosting WWOOFers can mean profit and loss at different times of the year. Regardless, Mr Kamitake is still enthusiastic about continuing the membership in WWOOF.

From scheduling point of view, WWOOFers typically work six hours a day and, like employees, six days a week. In return they receive the food and lodging for a full day. The meals must be prepared on one's own from the materials previously enlisted by WWOOFers and purchased by Mrs Kamitake. Naturally, vegetables and seasonal fruits as well as eggs and rice are being provided by Mr or Mrs Kamitake separately, as these foods are harvested from the fields, and the eggs from the farm's chicken coop. Ideally 2-3 WWOOFers and volunteers are assigned and being supervised by each staff.

Based on statistics received from the farm (Appendix 3.), the total number of WWOOFers (between June 2009 – Oct 2013) was 302, including returners, from a total of 29 different countries. The number of days spent on the farm (a sum

from all WWOOFers staying at the farm during a period) is varying, based on the months. The reason for this is most probably the corresponding number of WWOOFers staying at the farm at the same time (more WWOOFers mean more days).

4.4.2 Problems and difficulties

The biggest challenge on the farm is language. As many WWOOFers are arriving with little or completely without Japanese language knowledge, it often causes communication problems with Mr and Mrs Kamitake and with some of the staff, who do not speak English. Mr Oshima usually helps to translate between the host and WWOOFers; however, he cannot be present all time at the farm. Also, Ms Ozaki speaks good Chinese, which helps the Taiwanese and Hong Konger WWOOFers to understand the tasks better, in case they have difficulties with understanding the instructions in Japanese. Unfortunately, it still often happens, that WWOOFers experience communication problems; therefore the host prefers to accept WWOOFers who claim to have least basic conversational Japanese skills.

Other problems might include WWOOFers disregarding rules or having certain disabilities, which hinder them to carry out their tasks properly, or to live among the family, staff and other WWOOFers. However, the host never interrupts the WWOOFing, but might not accept a WWOOFer again, if he/she has caused problems during the first stay. Based on the feedback from the farm, they have only experienced situations, when WWOOFers have left from their own free will after feeling inconvenient or disturbed by something in their living or working environment. In one extreme case, a WWOOFer has suffered injury and had to be hospitalized, but disregarding the rule of having a valid insurance (it has expired during WWOOFing), the WWOOFer was subjected to a large hospital bill. Upon returning to his native country, he was trying to frame the farm for his mistake, but fortunately the farm was found innocent and the WWOOFer had to take responsibility for the situation.

4.4.3 Future plans; sustainability aspect

At the moment, the biggest challenge on the farm is to keep generating profit in order for the farm to be able to operate properly. As Mr Oshima writes: a “sustainable farm means both business and environment”, thus they have to develop both regarding themselves and the environment, which is a complicated task. The first step of development is to reduce the number of plants grown on the farm in order to help the staff to concentrate their efforts on a smaller variety of plants, while larger area will be available for planting. Furthermore, the free time of staff will be reduced, sadly, as the staff will have to focus more on their daily tasks even after work. Even so, the host and the staff are still wishing to continue working with WWOOFers and volunteers and try to teach them organic living.

Alternative development ideas are also often provided by WWOOFers, usually indirectly, through the surveys. Mr Kamitake considers the answers and requests of WWOOFers, and implements them if it serves the farm's and/or the WWOOFers' interests in a beneficial way.

4.5 Hotani Nature Farm as a Destination

In the following, the third part of the WWOOFer survey will be carried out. It includes 13 questions, which have been answered by both WWOOFers and volunteers. The reason of the survey is to change the perspective of the official WWOOF survey (which mostly deal with general questions) and create a more qualitative approach for the formal WWOOFers to express their opinion in their answers (in case of exerted questions). Though the number of the pool of answers only includes the same 15 respondents, due to the nature of the survey it is hoped that the results can be conclusive.

1. Reason of participation

Why did you participate in WWOOF?

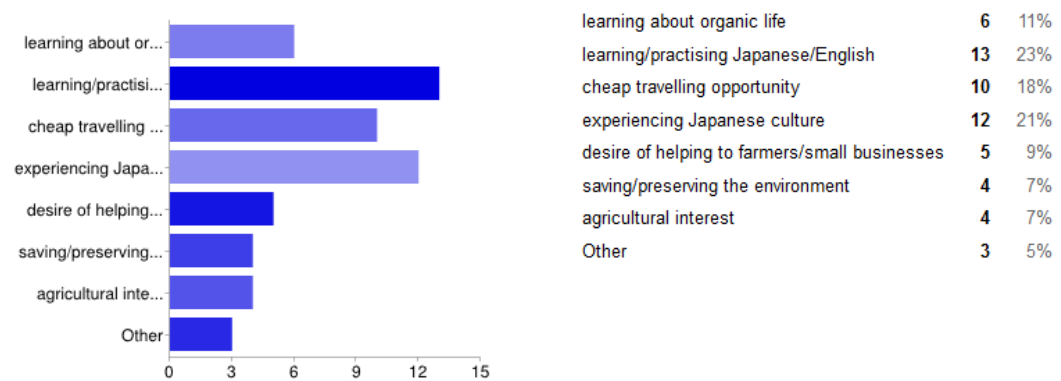


Table 4.10 – WWOOFer's reason of participation in WWOOF

Based on this chart, it can be observed, that most of the volunteers and WWOOFers choose to participate in the program for its benefits to gain language skills (in case of WWOOFers Japanese and in case of volunteers English).

The second and third most popular answer were “experiencing Japanese culture” and “cheap travelling opportunity”, which shows that the target country and the side benefits of the program were more important to the participants, than the direct aims of WWOOFing. However, half of the respondents were still directly interested in learning about organic life

2. Time of arrival, Starting at Hotani

When did you first arrive to Hotani Nature Farm?

Mar 2008	1
Jun 2010	30
Apr 2011	1
Oct 2011	25
Mar 2013	15
May 2013	15
Jun 2013	3 5 15
Jul 2013	1 3 (2) 18
Aug 2013	5
Sep 2013	25

Was Hotani Nature Farm your first WWOOFing experience?

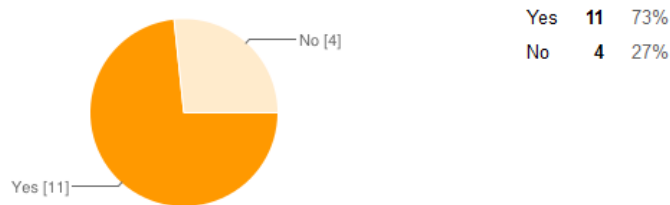


Table 4.11 – WWOOFer's time of arrival to Hotani Nature Farm and first WWOOFing experience

In the first question WWOOFers were indicating the very first time they visited Hotani Nature Farm. The three earliest arrival dates indicate the three Japanese volunteers.

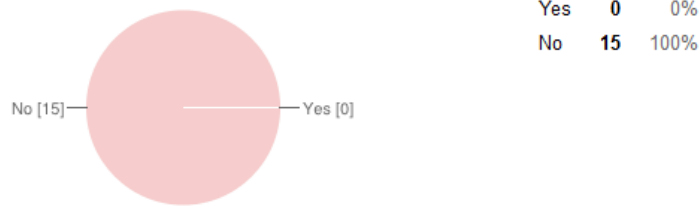
The second graph shows the rate of repeaters and first time stays. Most of the WWOOFers participating in this survey marked Hotani Nature Farm as their first WWOOFing experience. Most of the first time says have arrived during the summer 2013, especially in June or July.

The four people who has been WWOOFing somewhere before were asked also about previous WWOOFing experience. Three of them visited another host previously; one in Hiroshima, one in Mie and one in Nantan. One WWOOFer, however, travelled around for a longer time previously, and he answered with several city names from North- to South-Japan. He indicated as well that prior his WWOOFing experience, he was working in Japan for six months (with a Working Holiday visa).

The aim of this question is to research whether the farm had a positive impact on WWOOFers, who were introduced to WWOOFing at Hotani Nature Farm. The corresponding question to these two will be carried out below.

3. Previous Hotani stays, Length of stay at Hotani

Have you stayed at Hotani Nature Farm before?



How long have you stayed at Hotani Nature Farm?

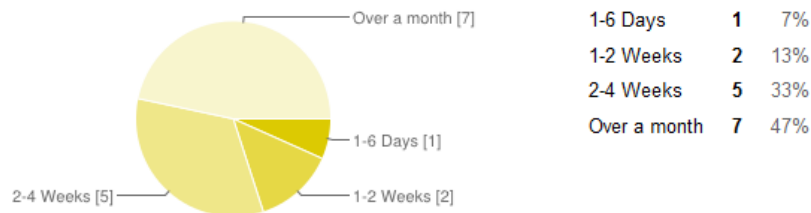


Table 4.12 – Question for previous stays at Hotani Nature Farm and length of stay at the farm

The first question was probably wrongly asked, as everyone answered “No” for it – even though this was supposed to be a question regarding the WWOOFers’ latest stay. Knowing all the respondents personally, there were actually four of them, who were returning to the farm after their first stay (two Taiwanese girls, one French man and one Polish girl). Therefore the results of the first question will be disregarded.

Based on the answers provided by the WWOOFers (disregarding the three answers provided by the three local volunteer) there is a correlation between Mr Kamitake’s preference and the length of stay of WWOOFers; the majority stayed over two weeks at a time, and many of them stayed for over a month. This statistic, naturally, refers for the summer time, when most WWOOFers are mainly using WWOOF to travel (as it was shown in Chapter 3). According to notes from previous stays, however, WWOOFers between autumn and summer (September/October to April/May) tend to spend a longer time at once at Hotani Nature Farm (*based on the pictures and posts on the hosts’ Face Book profile and WWOOF profile*).

4. “What did you like the most in Hotani Nature Farm?”

Most of the respondents answered to this question with specific staff members' names, or simply indicated all the staff. It seems that Hotani Nature Farms' biggest strength is the personnel, including Mr Kamitake. The WWOOFers have expressed their happiness and gratitude towards the people on the farm, as they made them feel useful, comfortable and safe; they taught WWOOFers different aspects of farm- and organic life, having experience and a vast knowledge; they provided them with treats (for example: special events, transfers to and from train stations...etc.). Both volunteers and WWOOFers also mentioned the environment created by the fellow WWOOFers – which is important, as WWOOFers spend most of their time together, but without the company of hosts and staff, due to the short working hours of WWOOFers.

Many of the WWOOFers mentioned the farming experience. This is the first point, where the farming experience became one of the most important aspect, based on earlier parts of the survey. The conclusion from this is that even if a WWOOFer does not start as a farm-oriented person, they will, eventually, be hauled into farm life completely, and most of them will really enjoy it despite the hard work.

Some other points were mentioning great work scheduling and the possibility to cook for themselves; the latter, which actually also caused many problems for other WWOOFers.

5. “Did you have any problems or difficulties during your stay at Hotani Nature Farm?”

Most respondents had little problems; however, there were two specifics, which the majority complained about.

The first was the toilet. At the farm, the toilet is outdoor-style, which means there is no running water. The toilet itself is separated from other facilities, but still part of the house (it can be accessed through the indoor courtyard, which connects the entrances of each building part). Many WWOOFers had trouble with the system, where they had to pour water into the toilet, especially during rush hours (morning before starting the work, mid-day), when after several uses the bucket

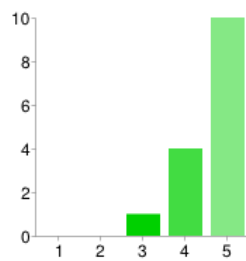
had to be refilled. As probably most WWOOFers are used to running water and had no outhouse experience, this must have been difficult for them to adapt to.

Another problem was the shower. There was no specification of what was problematic with the shower, but based on earlier conversations, many WWOOFers had troubles with the hygiene (though it was actually the responsibility of WWOOFers to keep it clean) and the mosquitoes. As for the latter, probably a mosquito net in front of the ventilation fan would solve the problem, as probably that is the way, where mosquitoes (and other insects such as centipedes) find their way in.

As the host already has stated, the WWOOFers found language issues problematic at times. This problem, however, can only be solved by both WWOOFers trying to be more prepared in Japanese skills when arriving to the farm and by the staff learning to speak either simply or in a foreign language. This is a responsibility of both sides, and both have to learn to adapt to the other.

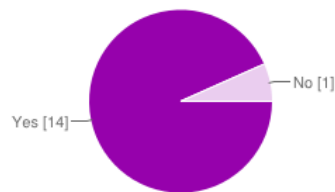
6. Evaluation of the farm, Wish to participate in WWOOF again and Return to Hotani

How did you like your stay at Hotani Nature Farm?



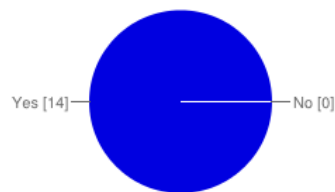
1	0	0%
2	0	0%
3	1	7%
4	4	27%
5	10	67%

Would you like to participate in WWOOF in the future?



Yes	14	93%
No	1	7%

If yes, would you like to return to Hotani Nature Farm?



Yes	14	100%
No	0	0%

Table 4.13 – Rating Hotani Nature Farm (1=worst, 5=best), WWOOFers' wish to participate in WWOOF in the future and their wish to return to Hotani Nature Farm

Regardless of the few difficulties, most WWOOFer rated the farm with the highest “5” score (based on the previously used scaling system in Chapter 3). This means Hotani Nature Farm is an attractive and enjoyable destination for those, who wish to participate in the program.

Out of all respondents, only one has answered that he does not wish to participate in WWOOF again. Also, all the other respondents, who replied with “Yes” to this question also positively replied on wishing to visit Hotani Nature Farm again. This shows how well the farm is currently maintaining the relationships with WWOOFers and how well they fulfil their role as host.

4.6 Hotani Nature Farm's Feedback on the Results of the Survey

Due to being occupied with administrative duties, the farm could not comment on the actual survey in-depth. Mr Oshima revised the completed work and approved it, provided the right to be published and expressed his contentment regarding the quality of the report.

The farm denoted during the interview (as it was mentioned above) that they are already taking WWOOFer feedbacks into account. The different approach of the survey conducted in this thesis was welcome; however, it is unsure, whether it was needed for the farm and whether or not will the results be utilized in the followings.

4.7 Conclusions

Based on the survey and the interview, the farm has several opportunities to develop. In the form of a SWOT analysis, it can be illustrated as follows:

	Helpful	Harmful
	Strengths	Weaknesses
Internal origin	Multilingual staff members Various working opportunities Knowledge Openness for development Flexible work schedule Fully equipped facilities Location	Host speaks only Japanese Misunderstandings based on communication differences Vermin (mice, cockroach) Toilet

External origin	Opportunities	Threats
	Growing internationality	Not effective system (too much different crops)
	Government aids	Changing economy
	Development based on WWOOFer feedbacks	Host decides to stop WWOOFing
		Too high food standards

Table 4.13 – Hotani Nature Farm SWOT analysis

According to the analysis, the farm already developed to a great volunteer destination, providing several opportunities for volunteers to learn and experience Japanese farm life. The weaknesses can be developed slowly; however, they need recognition from the host's side and effort to be dealt with. The opportunities show that the farm is provided with the circumstances to slowly but steadily change and accommodate more WWOOFers in the future. The threats, however, are showing factors, where the farm must or must not change to (if the system stays inefficient, the farm might lose profit; if the host decides to stop receiving WWOOFers, the farm as a volunteer destination will cease). Also, the changing economy in Japan and the high food standards might severely affect the farm; these circumstances are independent from the farm's management, and might appear regardless of the farm's efforts.

5 FINAL CONCLUSIONS AND THOUGHTS UPON THE THESIS

When starting the thesis, the original focus was on the development of Hotani Nature farm, according to the commission. However, in the meantime the question regarding the role of WWOOFers became just as important to deal with; they were the ones representing the demand side. Once the research revealed their motivations and needs, it became an important factor in the process of developing the farm according to their needs not only as volunteers, but also as leisure tourists.

At present, Hotani Nature Farm is going through changes in structure; as now it is officially a company, the costs and incomes are emphasized more, and the host and staff has less time to manage WWOOFers. This might lead to decrease in WWOOFers dedication to participate in everyday activities besides work, as WWOOFers will rely on the company of other WWOOFers and occasionally on other volunteers. Hopefully, however, the farm will be able to manage WWOOFers regardless, and will stay an active host in the future.

Regarding the research, it was a difficult task to objectively analyze the quantitative part; the low number of surveys limited the outcome, even though the research was specifically targeting WWOOFers. On the other hand, the similar patterns among answers suggested, that the responses bear a common ground and allowed the research to draw conclusions from the results. Though all WWOOFers are clearly volunteers based on the definition of Holmes and Smith (2010), they possess the same demands as other tourists compared to the definition of UNWTO (1995); as concluded in Chapter 4. However, WWOOFers are not supposed engage entirely in touristic activities, and are demanded to have genuine motivations other than travelling and language studies, as it is stated in the Terms of Use of WWOOF UK (2013). Therefore WWOOFing culture first has to develop in the minds of WWOOFers, before actually starting a development on hosts' facilities and lifestyle.

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LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1. – WWOOFer Volunteer Online Survey (available from: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1n9opVSEQ33ueDDHpJ4U1tmqKwugSrSJECDQjgmCF1xU/viewform>)

WWOOF volunteer survey

General questions

* Required

Gender *

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

Age *

At time of WWOOFing

- ☐ 19 or under
- ☐ 20-24
- ☐ 25-29
- ☐ 30-34
- ☐ 35 or over

Nationality *

- ☐ Austrian
- ☐ British
- ☐ French
- ☐ Japanese
- ☐ Hong Konger
- ☐ Hungarian
- ☐ Polish
- ☐ Taiwanese
- ☐ Other:

Occupation

(At the time of WWOOFing)

- ☐ Student
- ☐ Employee
- ☐ Self-Employed
- ☐ Currently Unemployed
- ☐ Other:

Field of study or line of work

Continue »

33% completed

WWOOF volunteer survey

* Required

Stay in Japan

Travelling experience to Japan

Purpose of travel *

(you can choose more than one answer)

- ☐ Tourism/sightseeing
- ☐ Language studying
- ☐ Learning about farming/agriculture
- ☐ Practical training/university credits
- ☐ Other:

Japanese language level

(According to your self-evaluation)

- ☐ None or very little (some basic words)
- ☐ Beginner (can read kana, can use basic introduction and phrases)
- ☐ Intermediate (can read and write kana and some of the kanji, can freely speak and understand spoken Japanese)
- ☐ Strong skills/ fluent (knows all the commonly used kanji, has no problem understanding or expressing complex ideas)
- ☐ Native

Have you been visiting Japan before? *

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If yes, how many times?

(in number)

Why did you choose Japan as a destination for your holiday? *

How much did you know about Japan prior your travel? *

(regarding the latest visit)

What were your expectations about Japan? How was the experience different from you expectations? *

(If the latest was not the first time, please write about the first time!)

How did you arrive to Japan? *

(means of transportation)

- ☐ by air via Tokyo, Haneda Intl Airport or Narita Intl Airport
- ☐ by air via Osaka, Kansai Intl Airport
- ☐ by air via other airport (specify airport in "Other"!)
- ☐ by sea via Osaka or Kobe port
- ☐ by sea via other port (specify port in "Other"!)
- ☐ Other:

Did you come directly from your country? *

(connecting flights or other transfers not included)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If no, which country have you been visiting previously?

How long have you been staying in Japan? *

(from the first day of entry until the day of final return to country of origin)

- ☐ less than a week
- ☐ 1-2 weeks
- ☐ 2-4 weeks
- ☐ 1-2 months
- ☐ 3-6 months
- ☐ 6-12 months
- ☐ over a year

Which cities have you been visiting? *

- ☐ Tokyo
- ☐ Kyoto
- ☐ Okinawa
- ☐ Osaka
- ☐ Hiroshima
- ☐ Sapporo
- ☐ Yokohama
- ☐ Nagoya
- ☐ ~~Osaka~~
- ☐ Hiroshima
- ☐ Sapporo

Which cities have you been visiting? *

- ☐ Tokyo
☐ Kyoto
☐ Okinawa
☐ Osaka
☐ Hiroshima
☐ Sapporo
☐ Yokohama
☐ Nagoya
☐ Kobe
☐ Fukuoka
☐ Sendai
☐ Chiba
☐ Niigata
☐ Nagasaki
☐ Nagano
☐ Wakayama
☐ Nara
☐ Kochi
☐ Akita
☐ Fukushima
☐ Other:

Write down your favourite feature about Japan! *

(Food, culture, media, clothes, festivals...etc)

Write down one thing you didn't like/found strange while visiting Japan! ***Overall travel experience ***

(How did you like your trip to Japan?)

1 2 3 4 5

Terrible (disappointed) ● ● ● ● ● Excellent (satisfied)

WWOOF volunteer survey

* Required

WWOOF Hotani Nature Farm experience

Your experience with WWOOF at Hotani Nature Farm

Why did you participate in WWOOF? *

(you can choose more than one answer)

- ☐ learning about organic life
- ☐ learning/practising Japanese/English
- ☐ cheap travelling opportunity
- ☐ experiencing Japanese culture
- ☐ desire of helping to farmers/small businesses
- ☐ saving/preserving the environment
- ☐ agricultural interest
- ☐ Other:

When did you first arrive to Hotani Nature Farm? *

Month Day 2013

Was Hotani Nature Farm your first WWOOFing experience? *

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If not, which cities you have been prior?

Have you stayed at Hotani Nature Farm before? *

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

How long have you stayed at Hotani Nature Farm? *

(If you have visited HNF more than once, state the first stay!)

- ☐ 1-6 Days
- ☐ 1-2 Weeks
- ☐ 2-4 Weeks
- ☐ Over a month

If you have stayed more than once, please state here the length of all following stays!

What did you like the most in Hotani Nature Farm? *

Did you have any problems or difficulties during your stay at Hotani Nature Farm? *

Share a story, where you needed something during your stay, and describe how it was solved! *

(for example: help, working tools, advise for free time activities, everyday life tools...etc. / from host, staff, fellow WWOOFers...etc.)

How did you like your stay at Hotani Nature Farm? *

1 2 3 4 5

Terrible (disappointed) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Excellent (satisfied)

Would you like to participate in WWOOF in the future? *

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

If yes, would you like to return to Hotani Nature Farm?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

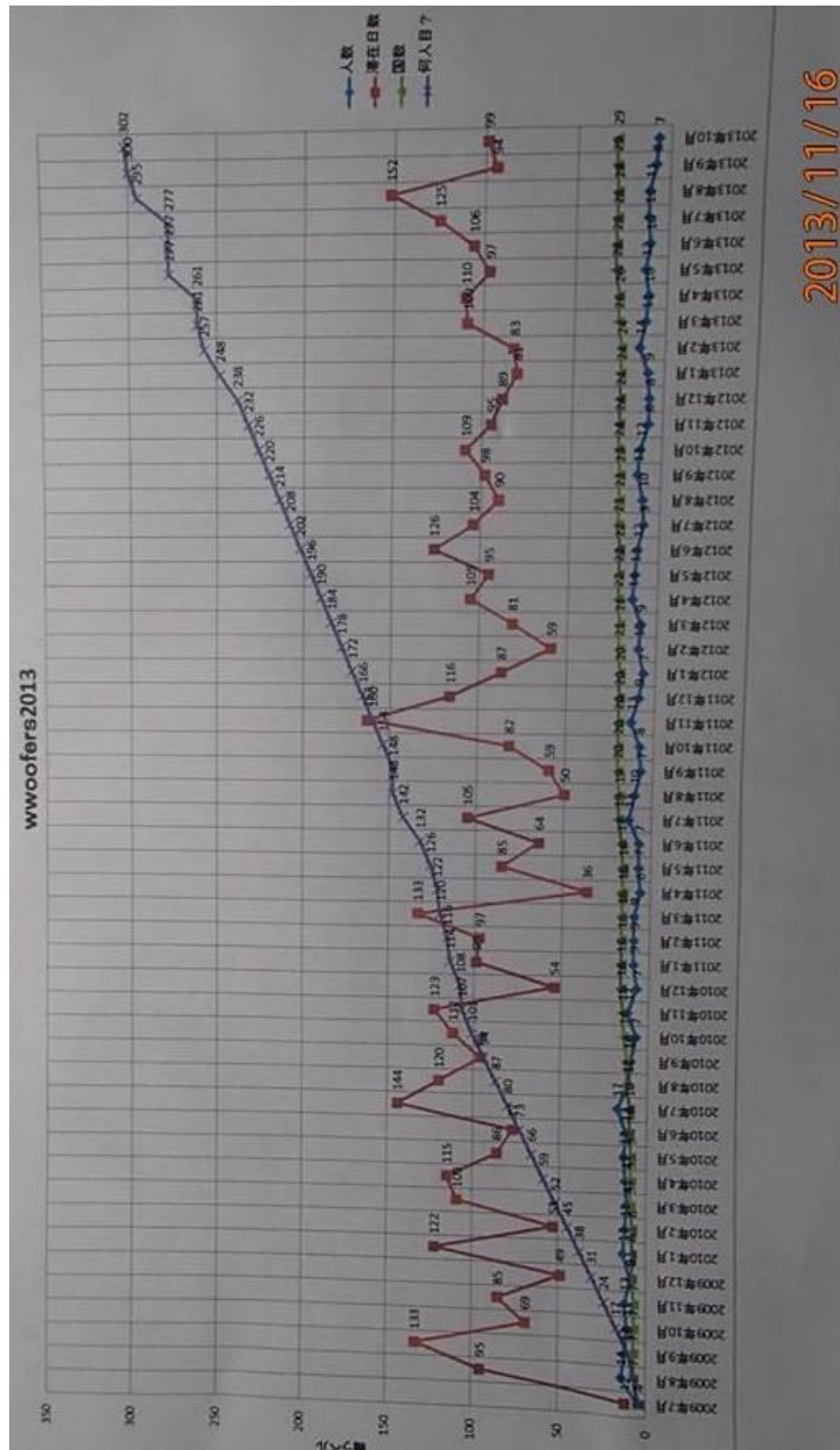
Appendix 2. – Foreign incoming tourists by country, 2012 (*most important sending countries and total numbers highlighted*)

Foreign Visitors to Japan by Nationality and Month for 2012 - Total

Source: Japan National Tourism Organization

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan-Dec.
Grand Total	681,786	641,451	676,662	779,431	867,946	918,705	957,578	947,194	903,221	803,548	648,548	516,729	8,359,105
Asia Total	544,694	420,853	494,079	595,389	670,466	718,103	758,932	743,239	673,221	503,561	418,118	350,729	6,387,977
South Korea	175,000	169,025	170,291	182,323	187,141	187,870	182,131	189,701	182,131	168,190	143,853	118,950	2,042,775
China	136,665	129,302	129,302	148,793	151,182	151,182	151,182	151,182	151,182	151,182	151,182	151,182	1,425,100
Taiwan	125,793	85,874	92,057	138,735	120,992	125,702	125,702	125,702	125,702	125,702	125,702	125,702	1,465,753
Hong Kong	48,455	40,814	56,690	159,421	166,558	180,550	180,550	180,550	180,550	180,550	180,550	180,550	1,465,753
Thailand	12,092	6,154	12,915	124,616	140,821	140,821	140,821	140,821	140,821	140,821	140,821	140,821	1,465,753
Singapore	8,981	6,720	11,605	12,806	13,090	13,216	13,216	13,216	13,216	13,216	13,216	13,216	1,465,753
Malaysia	8,876	30,779	11,748	114,312	12,731	20,716	8,445	7,794	492	9,442	10,610	15,170	130,183
Indonesia	5,130	2,315	4,570	7,597	9,594	23,538	7,108	9,451	94,719	7,996	22,610	13,353	101,460
Philippines	6,924	4,740	6,928	11,089	9,518	6,263	5,991	24,719	5,714	23,610	6,715	28,010	80,037
India	5,998	176	4,908	61,319	6,087	32,107	32,107	32,107	32,107	32,107	32,107	32,107	68,914
Vietnam	3,600	142	3,556	5,516	6,512	72,019	4,159	5,643	10,818	6,278	4,717	23,810	55,156
Israel	534	163	637	30,319	1,105	20,718	795	630	34,319	1,105	20,718	795	104,113
Europe Total	47,290	41,451	49,368	99,117	77,171	167,117	99,950	77,212	94,421	89,898	69,968	58,375	775,840
United Kingdom	12,654	50	12,294	12,294	12,294	12,294	12,294	12,294	12,294	12,294	12,294	12,294	116,396
France	7,685	176	7,791	134	10,636	834	14,457	164,219	14,457	164,219	14,457	164,219	130,412
Germany	6,351	176	7,699	102	10,963	121,519	9,508	9,511	10,963	121,519	9,508	9,511	109,898
Italy	2,762	259	2,736	11,515	4,599	26,100	3,935	4,273	10,963	121,519	9,508	9,511	51,801
Russia	3,172	219	2,751	155	4,099	96,010	3,888	92,219	4,273	10,963	121,519	9,508	50,176
Spain	1,372	175	1,447	192	2,333	128,319	3,248	2,550	4,273	10,963	121,519	9,508	35,207
Netherlands	1,717	171	1,914	111	2,421	67,519	2,338	1,962	2,338	1,962	2,338	1,962	30,266
Sweden	1,884	170	1,800	45	3,471	188,319	3,650	217,719	3,650	217,719	3,650	217,719	30,488
Switzerland	1,146	143	1,215	121,519	121,519	121,519	121,519	121,519	121,519	121,519	121,519	121,519	24,329
Finland	993	116	1,174	90	1,549	96,010	1,631	1,451	1,236	712	1,549	96,010	15,569
Belgium	781	180	919	100	1,279	96,519	1,328	1,450	1,050	1,050	1,050	1,050	14,608
Denmark	808	233	883	22,719	1,492	110,719	1,351	1,351	1,351	1,351	1,351	1,351	13,594
Austria	661	44,919	730	1,053	1,053	1,053	1,053	1,053	1,053	1,053	1,053	1,053	11,633
Ireland	857	23	662	50	928	82,219	960	103,819	833	57,519	833	57,519	10,388
Portugal	499	94	579	36,219	598	80,719	771	771	771	771	771	771	9,408
Norway	755	01	727	14,819	1,345	124,919	1,046	1,046	1,046	1,046	1,046	1,046	11,447
Africa Total	1,791	22	1,537	11,519	1,734	45,119	1,737	39,319	45,119	1,737	39,319	45,119	24,755
North America Total	60,890	57	536,319	58	81,696	70,519	80,019	122,019	78,914	65,919	70,519	80,019	876,401
U.S.A.	48,269	6	436,319	33	66,010	69,519	64,209	115,519	65,919	69,519	64,209	115,519	716,709
Canada	10,960	01	8,797	14,819	13,986	732	13,519	155,419	11,819	10,519	11,819	11,819	135,355
Mexico	973	162	890	20,319	1,809	100,419	1,815	1,815	1,815	1,815	1,815	1,815	19,502
South America Total	2,511	153	2,006	162	3,696	120,819	4,474	214,619	3,696	120,819	4,474	214,619	51,151
Brazil	1,389	204	1,015	92	1,924	125,819	2,633	215,019	1,661	91,819	1,924	125,819	32,111
Oceania Total	24,873	271	20,519	16,319	71,219	20,656	15,819	15,734	73,519	18,762	69,519	17,278	241,513
Australia	22,192	277	17,890	16,719	19,911	74,219	17,465	169,119	13,137	77,419	15,714	67,819	205,404
New Zealand	2,686	215	2,010	122	2,451	50,619	2,964	110,719	2,232	46,719	2,232	46,719	51,855
Statistics	37	36,219	14	17,719	35	75,019	38	35,719	35,719	35,719	35,719	35,719	498

Appendix 3. – WWOOFers hosted at Hotani Nature Farm, 2009-2013 /picture by Teppei Oshima/ ; the colours indicate: purple – total number of WWOOFers since 2009, red – total number of days WWOOFers stayed at the farm (monthly), green – total number of sending countries, blue – number of WWOOFers per month



[Online application form for WWOOFers](#)

[Online application for becoming a host](#)